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THE COPPER RIVER FISHERY. *890,000*

Unusual interest was centered in the Copper River fisheries in 1918. The combined catch of red, coho, and king salmon was considerably in excess of one million as against 869,000 in 1917. The catch undoubtedly would have been heavier had it not been for certain restrictions imposed upon fishing by the regulations of December 20, 1918, although as the result of misunderstandings and for other reasons the regulations were more or less disregarded. The regulations were in some respects unsatisfactory chiefly because of the development *fact* that *areas* in the delta were included apparently not technically within the scope of the law authorizing the Secretary of Commerce to impose limitations or prohibitions upon fishing within streams and 500 yards outside the mouths thereof. In promulgating the regulations, it was thought that limitations upon fishing on the flats was essential to the protection of the salmon. The idea also was to broadly distribute any burden of necessary limitations upon fishing.

Before the 1918 fishing season *1918* opened a number of interested cannerymen requested the Secretary of Commerce to modify the order. On May 18, 1918, an informal hearing occurred at Seattle at which time discussion occurred as to the best method of handling the matter. The results did not prove helpful.

As the season advanced it became *September 16* obvious that the regulations were in need of revision, hence on *September 16*, 1918, announcement was made by the Secretary of Commerce of a formal hearing at Seattle on November 22, to take up the matter. As a result, *new* regulations were promulgated on December 20, 1918. The regulations appear elsewhere in this report. *were promulgated on December 20, 1918.*

The Bureau's interests in the Copper River region were under the immediate supervision of Assistant Agent E. M. Ball. The following extracts from Mr. Ball's reports submitted at the close of the season appear of interest: